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NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN POLE PRODUCTION IN 1955

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Pole production in the northern Rocky Mountain area[1] recovered slightly during 1955 after a record low in 1954. The annual pole production survey[2] for 1955 shows that pole output increased 6 percent over the previous year.

As usual, about half the poles produced are western redcedar. Over three-quarters of the annual pole crop comes from two species--western redcedar and lodgepole pine (table 1). Western larch and Douglas-fir are the only other species presently used for commercial poles, although small quantities of ponderosa pine poles were reported in earlier years.

Table 1.--Number of poles produced in 1955

Species	Montana	North Idaho	Northeast Washington	Total	Percent of total
Western redcedar	79,438	42,755	9,667	131,860	44.77
Lodgepole pine	95,027	0	0	95,027	32.26
Western larch	33,925	15,964	11,799	61,688	20.95
Douglas-fir	5,828	97	16	5,941	2.02
Total	214,218	58,816	21,482	294,516	
Percent	72.74	19.97	7.29		100.00

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[1] The area includes Montana, all of Idaho north of the Salmon River, and the following counties of northeastern Washington: Ferry, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, and Whitman.

[2] Sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Pole and Treating Association. All known pole producing companies were contacted by mail. Their cooperation is greatly appreciated. The production of those missed or who failed to report is believed to be less than 1 percent of the total production.

Although western redcedar and lodgepole pine are the major pole species, all of the production increase during 1955 was due to a greater output of the two minor pole species. As table 2 shows, continued production sags were recorded for both western redcedar and lodgepole pine, while western larch and Douglas-fir production increased over 1954.

While Douglas-fir had the largest percentage gain, increased western larch production was the real factor that created the 6 percent increase in total production.

Table 2.--Percent change in 1955 pole production from previous year and peak production year

Species	Change from 1954	Change from 1947
	Percent	
Western redcedar	-5	-43
Lodgepole pine	-7	-73
Western larch	+67	-72
Douglas-fir	+674	-8
Other	0	-100
Total	+6	-64

Despite the slight production increase over the previous year, both 1955 and 1954 had the lowest pole production records of any year since the survey was started in 1947 (table 3).

Table 3.--Total poles produced in the northern Rocky Mountain area

Year	Species: Western redcedar	Species: Lodgepole pine	Species: Western larch	Species: Douglas-fir	Species: Other[1]	Total
1947	230,872	351,310	221,990	6,473	6,557	817,202
1948	212,785	138,099	90,879	5,419	804	447,986
1949	286,116	186,262	121,214	5,720	-	599,312
1950	217,049	92,338	71,651	9,070	-	390,108
1951	192,271	136,628	126,332	10,116	-	465,347
1952	217,721	104,621	152,761	19,049	-	494,152
1953	191,551	128,523	90,245	3,516	-	413,835
1954	138,624	101,842	36,938	768	-	278,172
1955	131,860	95,027	61,688	5,941	-	294,516
Total	1,818,849	1,334,650	973,698	66,072	7,361	4,200,630
Percent	43	32	23	2	[2]	100.00

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[1] Mostly ponderosa pine

[2] Less than 0.5 percent

In addition to the poles actually produced (grown and cut) in the northern Rocky Mountain area, additional poles are imported from Canada and the West Coast area of the United States and processed along with the locally grown poles. Table 4 indicates that Canada supplies most of the pole imports for the northern Rocky Mountain area. Ninety-five percent of all the 1955 imports were western redcedar and the remaining 5 percent were western larch.

Table 4.--Total 1955 processed pole production by source and species

Species	Northern Rocky Mountain	Canada	West Coast	Total	Percent of total
Western redcedar	131,860	73,292	54	205,206	55.23
Lodgepole pine	95,027	0	0	95,027	25.57
Western larch	61,688	3,725	0	65,413	17.60
Douglas-fir	5,941	0	0	5,941	1.60
Total	294,516	77,017	54	371,587	
Percent	79.26	20.73	0.01		100.00

Most of the poles grown in the northern Rocky Mountain area are processed within the area along with other imported poles. However, a small number of poles are shipped to processing yards in other areas. In 1955, these outside yards consumed 7,919 northern Rocky Mountain poles. This was 2.7 percent of the total 1955 pole production and they went largely to yards in Minnesota.

Table 5 shows the classification of the 1955 northern Rocky Mountain pole production by species, length, and American Standards Association class.

Table 5. -- Classification of 1955 pole production by species, A.S.A. class, and length. Northern Rocky Mountain area.

Pole length feet	A. S. A. Class 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	All
	Percent of Total										
					Western redcedar						
25	0.09	0.08	0.42	0.54	2.43	2.12	1.83	1.82	4.23	0.04	13.60
30	0.16	0.25	0.70	1.06	3.19	4.23	5.04	0.44	0.16	[1] 0	15.23
35	0.13	0.46	1.64	4.59	10.86	7.05	4.51	0.04	0.01	0	29.29
40	0.36	0.73	2.60	6.94	5.78	0.34	0.01	0	0	0	16.76
45	0.39	0.95	2.54	4.12	1.29	0.07	0	0	0	0	9.36
50	0.48	1.27	2.29	2.42	0.18	0	0	0	0	0	6.64
55	1.68	2.73	4.07	0.62	0.02	0	0	0	0	0	9.12
All	3.29	6.47	14.26	20.29	23.75	13.81	11.39	2.30	4.40	0.04	100.00
					Lodgepole pine						
25	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.14	0.58	1.92	3.60	2.14	27.81	1.09	37.35
30	0.02	0.05	0.16	0.54	2.39	6.23	11.72	0.27	0.08	0	21.46
35	0.02	0.09	0.40	2.10	8.09	11.20	5.44	0	0	0	27.34
40	0.03	0.19	1.08	3.44	4.06	1.56	0	0	0	0	10.36
45	0.03	0.26	1.12	1.40	0.30	0.08	0	0	0	0	3.19
50	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.01	0	0	0	0	0	0.10
55	0.01	0.05	0.08	0.05	0.01	0	0	0	0	0	0.20
All	0.13	0.67	2.92	7.70	15.44	20.99	20.76	2.41	27.89	1.09	100.00
					Western larch						
25	0.01	0.03	0.03	1.21	1.15	3.31	3.48	0.81	1.00	0.27	11.30
30	0.06	0.04	0.43	0.62	4.08	4.54	4.07	0.20	0.28	0	14.32
35	0.04	0.31	1.61	4.93	14.35	6.16	2.98	0.01	0	0	30.39
40	0.27	0.73	5.39	11.79	5.73	0.82	0.41	0	0	0	25.14
45	0.27	0.79	3.06	3.92	0.44	0.26	0	0	0	0	8.74
50	0.10	0.52	0.67	0.47	0.05	0	0	0	0	0	1.81
55	1.91	3.16	2.55	0.67	0.01	0	0	0	0	0	8.30
All	2.66	5.58	13.74	23.61	25.81	15.09	10.94	1.02	1.28	0.27	100.00
					Douglas-fir						
25	0.02	0	0.03	0.08	0.12	0.20	0.19	0.02	0.08	0	0.74
30	0.15	0.18	0.49	0.84	1.70	2.17	2.93	0	0.02	0	8.48
35	0.08	0.34	2.24	10.89	12.04	7.81	1.48	0	0	0	34.88
40	0.42	1.73	7.61	15.70	7.17	1.09	0	0	0	0	33.72
45	0.07	0.91	3.37	3.15	1.06	0.12	0	0	0	0	8.68
50	0.51	0.94	1.26	0.45	0.14	0	0	0	0	0	3.30
55	1.41	3.96	3.72	1.09	0.02	0	0	0	0	0	10.20
All	2.66	8.06	18.72	32.20	22.25	11.39	4.60	0.02	0.10	0	100.00
					All species						
25	0.05	0.05	0.25	0.54	1.69	2.24	2.55	1.70	9.63	0.35	19.05
30	0.11	0.16	0.51	0.85	3.12	4.77	6.54	0.34	0.16	0	16.56
35	0.09	0.34	1.32	4.11	10.79	7.97	4.43	0.02	0.01	0	29.08
40	0.26	0.61	2.78	7.04	5.36	0.75	0.08	0	0	0	16.88
45	0.27	0.74	2.28	3.37	0.89	0.11	0	0	0	0	7.66
50	0.29	0.81	1.41	1.43	0.12	0	0	0	0	0	4.06
55	1.29	2.14	2.77	0.49	0.02	0	0	0	0	0	6.71
All	2.36	4.85	11.32	17.83	21.99	15.84	13.60	2.06	9.80	0.35	100.00

[1] Zero (0) indicates no production